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November 13, 1972

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MEMORANDUM FOR: IEA - MELee

FROM: IEA - JKEney

SUBJECT: Status - GKR Radio Projects

1. General. USG assistance to Radio National Khmer is composed at this time of two separate projects. The first is the Khmer Radio Improvement Project consisting essentially of two new repeater transmitters at Kompong Som and Battambang and the second Radio National Khmer consisting of USG financed repairs to the country's major transmitter - a 120 KW located in Phnom Penh.

2. Khmer Radio Improvement Project (KRIP). In July 1970, the WSAG assigned coordinating responsibility for upgrading Radio Cambodia to NSC Ad Hoc PsyOp Committee on Viet-Nam. Among the actions taken were:

a) Detailed surveys of Cambodian Radio broadcasting capabilities and means to improve them (performed by VOA engineer, Richard Tripp on TDY).

b) Assistance in retuning transmitters and improving antenna ground systems as well as replacement parts to Radio Phnom Penh. This was supervised by VOA engineer Tripp. The VOA materials used were estimated to cost \$15,000. [REDACTED]

c) Loan and installation of a Navy 10 KW transmitter now operated by the GKR at Kompong Som to rebroadcast Radio Phnom Penh's signals to the coastal area.

d) Temporary rebroadcasting of Radio Phnom Penh's signal to northwest Cambodia by U. S. Air Force airborne transmitters

*Army and USIA/State Department review(s) completed.

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orbiting over eastern Thailand. This was replaced by a U.S. Army 50 KW transmitter based in eastern Thailand known as Frank Approach.

e) The project currently known as KRIP is an AID financed program designed to provide the GKR with two new 10 KW repeater-transmitters at Kompong Som and Battambang. It is our understanding that when completed these two repeater transmitters should provide the country with an adequate one program network. Stations could also be used as a nation-wide network or as three regional outlets with original programming. When finished KRIP will eliminate the necessity for the use of the U.S. Navy and Army facilities.

The Embassy Phnom Penh estimates that the Battambang work will be completed on or about April 1, 1973 and the Kompong Som portion on or about April 1, 1973 and the Kompong Som portion on or about June 30, 1973.

The VOA engineer supervisor, Richard Tripp was off TDY status and detailed for one year to the Department of State on a non-reimbursable basis and assigned to the Mission in July 1971. This arrangement expired on June 30, 1972, but was renewed by Henry Loomis on June 15, 1972 for a period ending on April 1, 1973. Mr. Loomis noted that "the detail would be curtailed if and when the Australians favorably responded to the USG proposal" to take over technical supervision of KRIP. All indications are that this will not occur -- hence, in all likelihood, Mr. Tripp will have to be extended beyond April 1, 1973.

As a background note it must be added that USIA authorized JUSPAO (in 1970) to transfer one 10 KW radio transmitter (as well as two non-operable transmitters for spare parts) to the GKR to replace one of its Phnom Penh transmitters reported to be in failing condition. These three items of equipment were originally turned over to JUSPAO by the U.S. Navy in 1970 after extensive use in airborne transmitter aircraft (value estimated at \$1,000.00). This disposition of used equipment of minimum value and in excess of USG needs was thought the best use in view of GKR's problems in keeping the NKR on the air.

As a matter of policy, except for KRIP to be completed in 1973, USIA has no plans for providing any further assistance to the GKR.

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3. Khmer National Radio.

a) On March 21, 1972, the 120 KW transmitter located in Phnom Penh, mainstay of the Khmer National Radio network, was made inoperable through enemy action (sapper attack). After a long delay by the GKR a request for assistance was received by the Embassy in June and authorization was given AID for IBS/E to commence procurement for repair parts for the 120 KW transmitter located in Phnom Penh.

The Government of Australia was requested to provide project supervision. On July 27, 1972 the GOA formerly agreed to provide engineer assistance. On July 29 the bulk of the required repair parts for the 120 KW transmitter were in Phnom Penh. By August 17, 1972 the Australian Radio Repair Team arrived, commenced work and had the transmitter on the air on September 15. It should be noted at this point that the Australian Government has for sometime provided the technical assistance necessary to refurbish and upgrade the 120 KW's studio facilities. The British still have a part time program advisor.

b) In its financial request to Washington, as relayed by AmEmbassy Phnom Penh in the following messages TOAID A-127 (6/7/72) and Phnom Penh 6248 (11/9/72), the GKR requested:

- 1) Restoration of 120 KW (discussed above). Also see State 111379 (6/21/72).
- 2) New medium wave 50 KW transmitter, plus spare parts.
- 3) New short wave 10 KW/AM transmitter, plus spare parts.
- 4) Complete stock of spare parts for the existing 50 KW short wave transmitter.

In view of the emphasis to reach Hanoi by all means available it was decided, essentially by the Sullivan Committee, to concentrate upon

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restoration of the 120 KW transmitter. While this station could not reach Hanoi, once back on the air it could reach the Khmer Communist hence all effort was concentrated upon its repair. The Embassy was informed of this and in essence, that the other requests would be considered at a later date.

The overall response to both of the above cited requests is found in State 172099 (9/20/72). In brief it states that AID stands ready to finance these GKR requests but only on the condition that either the GKR or GOA furnish the necessary technical assistance and supervision. As of this date no such assurance has been received. The focal point of this action is AmEmbassy Phnom Penh and not Washington.

4. Status of USG requests for technical assistance for KRIP and Khmer National Radio.

a) Khmer National Radio - As indicated in 3 a and b above the GOA provided the technical assistance required to put the Phnom Penh 120 KW transmitter on the air. Response to further requests have been negative.

b) KRIP (Antenna Rigger) - Former PAO Levine surfaced the need for an Antenna Rigger to assist engineer Tripp (Phnom Penh 5672, dated 8/28/72). Mr. Crane requested PAO Pettus to check possibility of GOA providing rigger in USIA 17765 (9/19/72). It should be noted that Mr. Crane had discussed need for both 120 KW and rigger assistance with a Mr. Spratt of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs, AID on June 21 during the Four Powers Meeting in Canberra. Reports, to date, from Canberra have been negative.

5. Current KRIP/National Khmer Radio related actions.

a) KRIP antenna materials

1) Kompong Som. Phnom Penh 7651, 11/7/72 reports:
"No information received Phnom Penh concerning

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whereabouts antenna material for Kompong Som loaded aboard President Jackson at San Francisco July 16 via Singapore to Phnom Penh."

Comment: H. DeLong, IBS/ET has transportation tracing location of this material as of 11/10/72, and will notify Phnom Penh as soon as possible of results of search.

2) Battambang. State 188696 (10/16/72): "ETA Hong Kong 5 November Carrier Weekly Service Hong Kong to Phnom Penh and will transport on first available vessel. ETA Phnom Penh 20 November. Advise this schedule satisfactory." Phnom Penh 7202 (10/21/72): "The listed ETA very satisfactory."

b) Government of Australia Policy.

In Canberra 5756 (10/24/72) and Canberra 5990 (11/6/72) the GOA has for the present given technical assistance to GKR radio projects a very low priority. There is little likelihood of any policy change until after their elections on December 2, 1972. State is pessimistic about further GOA involvement even after elections.

c) KRIP Progress.

Through no fault of USG progress on KRIP is well behind schedule (see KRIP report September 1972, 10/10/72). IBS/E in memorandum to MELee (10/31/72) feels that at present rate need for VOA engineer could drag on well beyond his termination date of April 1, 1973. PAO Olsen has copy of MELee response to IBS/E memo and is currently reexamining tentative KRIP work completion deadline (June 30, 1973).

d) Tripp Washington visit/briefing.

Engineer Tripp will be in Washington prior to starting his home visitation on December 16 (12/16/72 to 1/3/73).

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Mr. Crane will want him to brief on current KRIP status. Attending this briefing should be Ed Martin and Howard DeLong of IBS/E. It is also essential that he talk with AAntippas and Ed Richards of State EA/LC and Gerry Kamens of AID.

6. Contacts.

The following contacts are invaluable both for policy, information and coordination purposes:

IBS/E	Howard DeLong -- knows project -- very realistic technician. x 54735
State EA/LC	Ed Richards. x 23132
AID	Gerry Kamens x 23927 John Bourne x 75345 Constantine Vardas x 23132

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